



**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Shepard Building  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

**Peter McWalters**  
**Commissioner**

January 16, 2008

To: Adult Education Program Providers  
From: Johan Uvin, Director, Office of Adult Education  
Re: Complaints of Sexual Harassment and Title IX

My office recently received a report from a program provider that it had received complaints of sexual harassment from two students enrolled in its program. Both complaints alleged harassment by another student in the program. The program director promptly investigated and effectively resolved both of these complaints. Apparently, however, the provider did not have in place a written policy and complaint procedure for dealing with complaints of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment.

This is just a reminder that recipients of Federal financial assistance who operate educational programs provide assurances that they are in compliance with Title IX as a condition of receipt of federal funds. Title IX requires not only that the recipient not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational program or activity it operates, but also that it take additional specific steps. These steps include the adoption and publication of grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of sex discrimination complaints, including complaints of sexual harassment. Recipients must also adopt and disseminate a policy against sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and designate at least one employee to coordinate its Title IX responsibilities. These steps are important so that students know of our local providers' obligations to address discrimination and how to report it so that it can be remedied.

Procedures adopted by program providers will vary considerably in detail, specificity and components, reflecting differences in organizational size and administrative structures. I encourage you to take any steps that your organization may yet need to take in order to be in full compliance with Title IX's requirements. If you should have any question, you can call Marvin Abney, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner for Equity/Access (222-8437), or contact the Office for Civil Rights/Boston of the U.S. Department of Education at 617-289-0111.

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